



THE EDUCATED LIFE: UC'S CAMPUS OF THE FUTURE

July 2015

It is appropriate to begin a document of this nature by acknowledging that its subject matter, the University of Canberra's campus in Bruce, is on land of which the Ngunnawal people are the traditional custodians.

PREFACE

In 2030 the UC campus in Bruce will be an extraordinary place. People from around the world will visit it and witness a new-model community in action: a community from young to old living an educated life.

The planning for this transformation took place in the period 2008-15, driven by a vision of how universities will be in the future and UC's specific goals of:

- Advancing our educational and research performance;
- Integrating with the surrounding district of Belconnen; and
- Adding to the Territory's growth as a knowledge economy.

Recent developments on the campus already provide a glimpse of what is possible; in particular the opening in 2014 of:

- Cooper Lodge student residences, with associated retail space
- The Health Hub, with its GP Super Clinic, allied health and student-led clinics and a research collaboration with the National ICT Australia (NICTA), and
- The Sporting Commons, with the co-location there of the Brumbies Super XV Rugby Team, ACTSport, Special Olympics ACT and the UC Research Institute of Sport and Exercise.

Public consultation is now under way over the sketch designs for the University of Canberra Public Hospital, construction of which commences in 2016 and will take two years to complete.

These four developments – Cooper Lodge, the Health Hub, the Sporting Commons and the UC Public Hospital – are not isolated or one-off projects. They are part of a long-term initiative to make the main campus of UC a campus of the future, and to embed UC's identity as an innovative university committed to professional education and applied research.

Work began on the initiative seven years ago, formalised by the designation of the campus as a "major project" by the then Chief Minister on 28 April 2008.

Since then the following documents have been or are currently being prepared:

- A Campus Master Plan (2009, revised in 2012)
- A Campus Character Plan (2012)

- A Sustainability Strategy 2010-2015
- A Student Accommodation Strategy 2011-2015
- A Wayfinding and Signage Strategy 2010-15
- Fundamental Principles of Campus Development (2011, revised in 2015)
- The University Strategic Plan called *Breakthrough* (2013-17)
- An Invitation for Expressions of Interest in Developing Land on the UC Campus (“the Campus Prospectus”) (2013)
- An Alliance Agreement with the Brumbies over the Sporting Commons (2013)
- A Collaboration Agreement with ACT Health over the UC Public Hospital (2013)
- A Heritage Assessment (2014)
- A Development Impact Study (2014)
- An Agreement of Strategic Intent between the ACT Government and UC (2015)
- An Urban Plan (2015)
- A Variation to the Territory Plan (TPV 347) making specific provision for UC within the Bruce Precinct Code (submissions closed 29 June 2015)
- Development Density Rules (in preparation)
- Design Protocols (in preparation)

Consultation with stakeholders and neighbours has taken place, “think tank” meetings have been held about the UC Public Hospital and the Health Innovation Precinct, and there has been much constructive discussion with ACT Government directorates and agencies. Amendments to the University of Canberra Act 1989 were passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly in April 2015, and other legislative and regulatory changes are in the pipeline.

The transformation of the UC campus in Bruce is about to take off. This document aims to be a succinct summary of the goals of the transformation (The Vision), the rationale (The Reasons), the likely early developments (The Projects) and the steps we are taking to ensure success with accountability (The Process).

I hope you are as excited by these proposals as we are and I look forward to hearing people’s views.

Professor Stephen Parker

Vice-Chancellor

29 June 2015

THE VISION

By 2030 the UC campus will be a leading example of how a modern, world-class university transformed its physical surroundings to create an integrated learning community where:

- Scholars, students and the public intermingle;
- Organisations from nearby and around the world collaborate with the University, creating new knowledge, providing work-integrated learning opportunities for students and developing solutions to real and important problems; and
- The generations mix, from childhood years to senior years, in a common commitment to lifelong learning.

It will be a campus that is held up as one of the great success stories emerging from a difficult period of transition for higher education in the decade between 2010 and 2020. During that period, on-line learning emerged as a serious and valid alternative to face-to-face education, university rankings stimulated global competition for talented staff and students, questions were asked about how well universities were preparing graduates for a changing world of work, governments faced competing demands on public moneys, and private providers of higher education established themselves as competitors to public universities.

Campus-based universities, particularly those with unused land, had to make a call about their future identity. UC's strategic decision was to create an amazing zone of learning on its original campus, whilst expanding and diversifying its operations through partnerships interstate and overseas.

By 2030:

- A **Health Precinct** on the north-west corner of the campus will include public and private hospitals, a cluster of independent living and aged care facilities, numerous specialist clinics and research enterprises such that UC has become a regional health hub with one of the largest Health faculties in the country. Student demand for our places will be strong, because we offer more clinical experience and work-integrated learning than anywhere else locally. Clinicians will be attracted into the Territory by the prospect of joint appointment in the University. The cluster will have changed the health landscape, providing a platform for innovations that address the healthcare challenges of the future, and will have improved the health and wellbeing of people in the Canberra region.
- An **Innovation Park** in the south-east corner of the campus will be a thriving eco-system of research and development in biomedicine, biotechnology, sports technology, materials fabrication and IT solutions, such that national and global organisations compete for space on campus to be close to research academics and students. The Park will be a significant contributor to the ACT economy and enable collaboration on next generation research and technology to create links and opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs, potential customers and funding entities.
- A **Campus Community** of over 3000 residences will offer the choice for staff, alumni and members of the general public to live in housing topographies co-designed by leading architects, and staff and students of the University. These dwellings will be held up as attractive, innovative and sustainable living units, only made possible by their location in the special context of a university campus. Residents will use the cultural, sporting, education, health and retail amenities of the campus, providing scale and growth beyond the level that would otherwise have been possible. They will have been attracted by a lifestyle available nowhere else in a space of 120 hectares: the Educated Life.
- **Childcare facilities** in different parts of the campus will serve staff and students of the University, on-campus residents and businesses, and the surrounding population, including the fully-developed suburbs of Bruce and Lawson.

- **Primary and secondary schools** on campus will be top-performing, high demand schools with boarding accommodation for senior secondary international students, offering pathways into university courses.
- The **University of Canberra College**, founded in the 1990s, will be a major national tertiary preparation institution, with diploma and English Language courses that help domestic and international students of all ages enter bachelor and masters degree programs.
- The **University of the Third Age** will draw on the University's units and programs to offer a wide range of non-award courses for the intellectual stimulation of Canberra's growing retiree community.
- The University will have built on its initial **world-ranking** in 2013 to feature in all the main world-rankings, known for the fact that its graduates are in high demand because of their practical skills and generic attributes and the fact that its research output is relevant and useful. It will only have been able to do so because its campus was transformed in the period after 2015, greatly expanding the opportunities for its staff and students.
- In particular, UC will be Australia's leading university in **Sport Scholarship and Research**, due to the completion of all three stages of the Sporting Commons and the re-location to campus of further major sporting teams.
- A **Great Hall** will provide performance and exhibition space, extending significantly Canberra's cultural facilities.
- **Open spaces and pathways** will foster healthy living by encouraging movement around the campus to explore its amenities, ecosystems and destinations.
- The **Belconnen district** will be a thriving and bustling part of Canberra, where the Town Centre, the Lake and the UC campus connect with each other logically and create a magnet for employment and entertainment: interesting places in which to linger and explore.
- The **Territory** will indisputably be the education capital of Australia, analogous to small cities in Europe and the United States which are defined by the presence of prominent schools, institutes, universities and research organisations.

Most importantly, the visitor coming onto campus in 2030 will see how the University's strong sense of mission is manifested in its physical environment. In earlier societies when one entered the surrounds of a monastery or the walls of a great university it was evident that the commitments to worship, solitude or scholarly reflection were enabled by the design, lay-out and orientation of the buildings. In the case of traditional universities, cloisters and boundaries reinforced the idea that the university was a special place apart from the general community. When one entered them, one knew one was coming to a place that was very different.

In our case we need that immediate sense of impact, but create the reverse sensation. People should know they have come to an institution which offers not a retreat from the world but an engagement with it; looking outward to the world in a welcoming way. It should be evident from the moment one comes onto the campus that one is entering a university committed to professional education, applied research, culture and activity, for the benefit of everyone, whatever their age or stage of life, whatever their background and whatever their physical abilities.

This thinking is hardly new. Before an era of urban planning laid down rules in advance, communities were designed along principles of cosmology; of how beliefs about the universe and our place within it could be symbolised. Some ancient towns in China, for example, were planned as an enlarged Holy Field, the nine-in-one square. In square 1 was an audience hall, in square 5 was the palace, in square 9 was the market, and so on. Heights, distances and areas reflected a numerology rich in symbolism; making sense of the world through physical design, according to the beliefs of the time.

In some European cities, the Cathedral, coming from the word "cathedra" meaning seat, was the organising element of a whole surrounding community. The Cathedral's office-holders had similar titles to universities', such as deans and provosts. Within the environs of the Cathedral were meeting places, markets and cultural activities.

Modern cities with the good fortune to have capacious campuses can make their universities the organising element for sustainability and growth in a similar fashion, reflecting a secular commitment to knowledge and progress.

Inevitably, the 2030 vision just described was materialised in stages. During the period 2015-20, the Health Precinct and Innovation Park were completed and some residential accommodation was released, commencing in the Bimbimbie Precinct, providing funds for further development. In 2020, the schools and boarding accommodation were opened, new sporting and cultural facilities were completed and more residential accommodation was planned for release as Belconnen became a drawcard for a population looking for new ways to live.

THE REASONS

The rationale for this initiative lies in a mix of academic and institutional considerations.

Being ready for how people will learn in the future

The transmission of knowledge is moving from the lecture theatre to the cloud; from the book to the app. Universities which rely only on a good curriculum and reputation will still attract enrolments, but their campuses will become largely research facilities, with students calling in from time to time. The bustle will go and something fundamental will be lost from the university experience.

But universities which organise their campus around a coherent approach to learning can thrive. In our case we can boost massively our work-integrated learning, supported by new model learning spaces which force students to articulate and defend their views, in person and through technology. The lecture theatre becomes the on-campus workplace; the tutorial room becomes the Inspire Centre (modelled on our experimental Building 25, opened in 2012).

Looking ahead to the kinds of research which will be funded

Governments and industry increasingly want to fund discovery and inventiveness which solve definable problems and create economic activity. Disciplinary, “blue skies” research will always be funded, but in a small number of institutions selected strategically. Universities like the University of Canberra, which came out of Australia’s first College of Advanced Education, need to create an environment and a culture of applied research, practical discovery and problem-solving. The vision for the campus is intended to do this.

Differentiating ourselves within Canberra

Academically, UC is different from the ANU and should continue to be so; offering professional education and applied research, as an evolution from its proud CCAE past. By bringing the world onto campus, as well as going out into the world, we can offer placements, projects and paid employment for our students, and we can form research and development links between third parties and our researchers, including our Honours and doctoral students.

We can see this happening already in the Sporting Commons, which has been open for less than a year. We now have honours and doctoral students working with the Brumbies and the University of Canberra Capitals; and demand for coursework and research places in relation to sport is rising. The Environment Chamber is a research facility as well as a training facility, part-funded by the AIS nearby, offering new insights into the effects of altitude and humidity on athletes. The Health Hub is already a hive of student-led clinics, to be expanded onto the fourth floor shortly. The Hospital will be a teaching hospital, and UC schools on campus would be the equivalent for teacher education students. All the while, it is attracting students into Canberra and creating jobs.

The ANU cannot, and should not, go down this path.

Remaining competitive and sustainable

Higher education reforms since 2010 have introduced market forces into domestic recruitment, to sit alongside international market forces. Nationally, the reforms favour the well-established institutions which have had many decades of taxpayer funds, and for much of their history a monopoly position, giving them a strong brand against which to recruit. If fee de-regulation comes about, life will become even harder for the younger, challenger universities like UC. We need to offer a distinct and compelling experience to make us the university of choice for a certain kind of student, teacher and research academic.

We also need additional streams of revenue. All successful universities enjoy this, whether from endowment funds built up over many years from alumni and philanthropists, or from commercial activities, often sponsored by the State Government. UC has no such advantages. Our alumni are mainly from a HECS generation in a public service town. Our donor base is growing, and a small number of bequests are being reported, but it will be a long time before “advancement” produces a surplus over its costs. UC has little in the way of commercial property to generate a rental income, unlike Group of Eight universities, even modern ones such as Monash University’s 30 Collins Street in Melbourne; and of course the ANU’s City West.

Campus development is what will provide that extra untied few per cent of revenues that enable us to build up reserves and see us through down-times in markets and fortunes. It will also lead to an increase in donations. Donors give to causes and missions, not transient vice-chancellors. When people see how we have re-invented ourselves to create a learning community committed to the educated life, this is what will generate excitement and commitment.

Building on our good fortune

Another piece of the rationale comes down to our good fortune: we can do this because we are blessed with a campus larger than we will ever need for education in the traditional form, a form that is now passing. With under half of our campus used for academic purposes, there will never be a time when it will be used up on a model where students sit in lecture theatres and researchers sit in their room or work in their lab. First of all, as mentioned earlier, tertiary education is morphing into new forms. Second, the population of school-leavers is no longer there. Although the number of year 12 finishers will start to take off again after 2018, Canberra’s population is ageing and our future is in postgraduate and community education as much as in undergraduate education. Furthermore, with the highest proportion of bachelor degree holders in the nation, there is restricted scope for higher education in Canberra to extend its reach into the local population.

And in relation to research, if we want to solve real problems we need to be working with those who experience them.

By engaging with the world on campus and around campus we can re-invent ourselves and capitalise upon our inheritance.

Benefiting our communities

The immediately surrounding community will benefit by an integration of the campus with the Town Centre and the Lake and by the development of further health, sporting and cultural facilities. And if public service agencies should move to other sites, the vibrancy and employment provided by the campus will be vital to the kind of structural adjustment that inevitably comes round from time to time.

More generally, as the recent study by Deloitte has shown, universities and research institutions are now significant parts of the local economy. In fact, Canberra already has a higher proportion of its population who are staff or students at a university than any other city in the country. If the Australian Public Services reduces its presence in Canberra, perhaps for reasons of technology and politics, then the private sector will also be affected. By building up an alternative, clean sector in education and research, the city re-invents itself and the private sector has new business.

THE PROJECTS

So much for the vision and rationale taking us to 2020.

To provide a clearer idea of what will happen in the early phase, three major projects applicable to the period 2015-20 are described below:

- the “Health Cluster” – an integration of health services for community use, student training and academic research;
- the “Innovate Residential Project” - a 15 year project to mix broad scale innovative residential development into the campus structure; and
- the “Tech Park”—a development for the integration of national and international research, education and industry partners into the UC campus.

The Health “Cluster” within the Health Precinct

The Health “Cluster” will be a mixed-use development adjacent to the University of Canberra Public Hospital and consist of a range of health facilities to service the needs of the general public, as well as the work experience and research needs of UC’s students, academics and researchers.

More specifically, the Health “Cluster” is expected to incorporate:

- a dementia-specific aged care facility with embedded education and research opportunities, as well as paid employment for students;
- a small scale private hospital offering research and work experience opportunities including for sports health researchers and students at UC’s Faculty of Health;
- specialist consultation rooms to be operated in collaboration with the UC Research Institute of Sport and Exercise;
- a private radiological oncology service to complement existing services in the ACT, and to support a significant expansion of course offerings at UC;
- a large scale diagnostic and imaging services facility to meet community needs for such services, and to support course offerings at UC in this discipline;
- facilities for pathology services and laboratory-based research, to be integrated into UC’s course offerings; and
- dental healthcare facilities to be co-located within the private hospital.

Residential development will:

- consist of a broad scale residential development on campus;
- provide greater housing and lifestyle options to the ACT community;
- integrate new and innovative residential design, density, and form research projects in the development of new housing strategies;
- fund the position of 'Chair of Urban Design' to lead the expansion of UC's course offerings and industry-funded research in all areas of urban design;
- provide a reference site on campus for research projects in housing design, urban design, community health and mental health policy studies focusing on research into the relevance of community and mental health in housing design criteria;
- provide the opportunity to establish work-oriented learning modules into coursework, to assist with concept design, feasibility and scoping studies, as well as the actual development of the Project;
- create a development which can be used as a reference point for other ACT developments for the review of statutory planning laws and requirements;
- create a more integrated and enriched university experience for UC students, by blending the campus into the broader Belconnen and ACT community;
- establish a sustainable commercial model for retailers and service providers present on campus;
- enhance the natural environment and landscape by investing in sustainable practices and design as a cornerstone of all developments;
- draw on Development, Design and Density Rules and Protocols applicable to all developments on campus (including any future redevelopment of existing campus buildings);
- provide for the reinvestment of all proceeds of developments on campus into UC's core activities; and
- implement an integrated strategy for parking, traffic circulation, and recreational space on campus, to ensure that it fits within the wider campus and ACT transport and roads network.

The Innovation Park

The Innovation Park will consist of:

- engagement with national and international research partners to pursue research and collaboration opportunities directly from the UC campus;
- up to 8 separate but integrated development sites, each master-planned to focus on commercialising the research conducted at UC and other Australian research organisations; and
- collaboration with a biotechnology company that will help develop and commercialise specific biopharmaceutical research undertaken at UC—and build the first development site.

THE PROCESS

Since the germ of the idea for campus development, the University has known that it would need appropriate governance and probity arrangements. A separate committee of Council was created, the Campus Development Board, under the initial chairmanship of one of Canberra's most senior and experienced property consultants, Mr Jim Service. A project adviser was engaged, under a carefully negotiated deed, whose activities are supervised directly by the CDB. All projects with third parties are subject to due diligence processes and appropriate legal, probity, commercial, accounting and tax advice.

To ensure that third parties had an equal opportunity to express interest in partnering with us we issued a Campus Prospectus in September 2013, incorporating the 2011 Fundamental Principles for Campus Development and explaining our processes, including a template for the lodgement of an Expression of Interest.

The Campus Development Board has designed a Project Evaluation Template and this is completed for each project to be considered by Council and its committees. The template covers all aspects of the projects, including independent advice sought by the University and the proposed development plan for the project.

To ensure requisite expertise and oversight various aspects of possible projects go to the relevant committee of Council; in particular the Campus Development Board, the Environment and Works Committee, the Finance Committee and the Audit & Risk Committee. The chairs of the Environment and Works and Finance Committees sit on the Campus Development Board to ensure co-ordination. Final decisions are made by Council, being a statutory governance body on which the majority of members are appointed by the Chief Minister.

A further part of the process is ensuring that any revenues generated by campus development are put to good use. Council has endorsed in principle a proposal that one third of the proceeds will be applied to the University's research activities to help boost our world ranking; one third will go to the UC Foundation and be used mainly for scholarships for disadvantaged and deserving students and one third will go into an endowment as a strategic reserve which could be used for a multitude of purposes, including repayment of borrowings.

CONCLUSION

When this vision is materialised, Canberra will have a unique university in its midst, attracting people into the Territory and generating economic growth. The University invites comments from all its stakeholders – staff, students, alumni, partners, political parties, the business community and citizens generally – to help ensure our continuing success.